the ROHMER REVIEW

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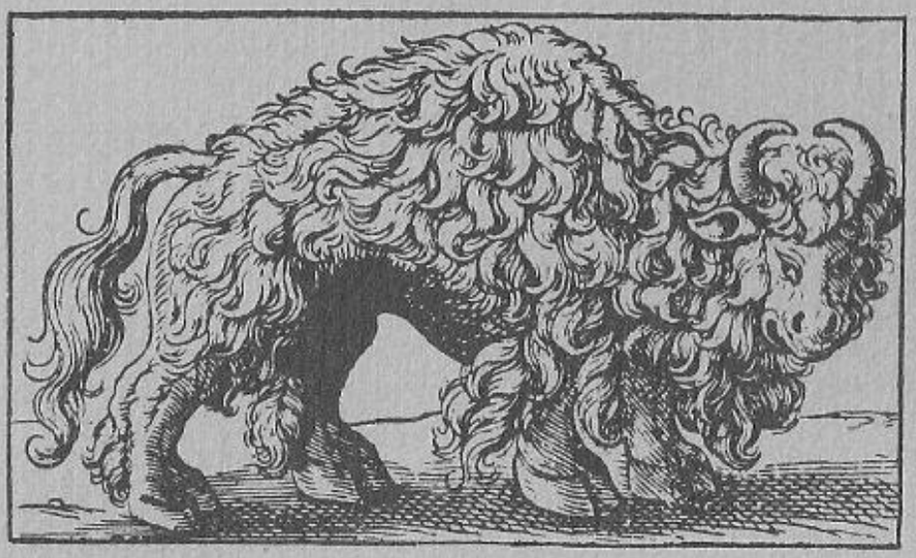

NOTES
from the Editor

The "D. N. Smith" letters (see page 9) have not been the only interesting items to arrive in the mail. The articles by Ray Stanich and Stephen Shutt were constructed out of editorial correspondence, and indeed almost half the wordage in this issue was originally incorporated in letters. It is this participation on the part of *TRR*'s readers that provides a large part of the pleasure I take in this journal, and the incentive to keep it going.

More material from *TRR* readers is at hand, in the form of news items. Vince Miranda and Chris Steinbrunner both call attention to the reprint of *Detective Comics* No. 27, issued in large format as "Famous First Edition No. C-28" by National Periodical Publications Inc. [75 Rockefeller Plaza, NYC 10019], priced at $1.00. Feature attraction is the first "Batman" story, but of more interest to Rohmer enthusiasts is a four-page installment of a panel art adaptation of "The Mysterious Doctor Fu Manchu!". This adaptation began in *Detective Comics* No. 18 (Aug 1938) and is a reprint of a strip which appeared in daily newspapers in 1932-33. It is an excellent pictorial version of the Rohmer story, quite faithful to the original text. Copies of the reprint *may* still be available from the publisher, but be sure to include an extra amount for postage and a stamped, addressed envelope for the return of your money if the issue is no longer available.

Marvel Comics' *Master of Kung Fu*, in which someone called Fu Manchu appears as a supporting character, continues on its increasingly mindless path. I have given up on the U.S. edition, and only read the French-Canadian version. Somehow it seems less objectionable when filtered through another language. The story has recently branched out into another magazine, *The Deadly Hands of Kung Fu*. The "Special Album Edition" of the latter, dated Summer 1974, has a good general article entitled "Fu Manchu, Sax Rohmer and Shang-Chi" by David Anthony Kraft: five pages long, with nine interesting illustrations. This issue also has some artwork by *TRR* contributor Mike Vosburg, whose name gets misspelled on the contents page.

Luther Norris's *Pontine Dossier*, 1974 Edition, contains a short piece of fiction by Michael Avallone called "Children of the Night", which involves among other things a curious juxtaposition of Fu Manchu and Sherlock Holmes. [$4.00, from the publisher at

[continued on page 3]

SOME NOTES ON ROHMER'S WITCH-QUEENS

by Stephen Shutt

In his stories, Sax Rohmer wrote about two Egyptian "witch-queens", Taia and Hatasu. Taia was probably the unnamed queen to whom the title BROOD OF THE WITCH QUEEN refers. Substantiation for this can be found in Chapter 21 of SHADOW OF FU MANCHU, where Fu Manchu tells Morris Craig:

> "Amongst those curious possessions to which I referred is the mummified head of Queen Taia, known to the Egyptians as the 'witch queen.' Her skull possesses uncommon characteristics. And certain experiments I am carrying out with it would interest you."

References to this mummified head can be found in others of the Fu Manchu books. For instance, in Chapter 18 of THE MASK OF FU MANCHU, Shan Greville is held captive in Fu Manchu's laboratory. His description of his surroundings includes the following observations:

> There were a number of glass cases in the room, containing most singular objects. In one was what looked like a living human head, that of a woman. But, as I focused my horrified gaze upon it, I saw that it was an unusually perfect mummy head.

There were two queens named Taia (or Tiye, in the more modern transcription) in Egyptian history. The first of these was the wife of Amenhotep III. For her, Amenhotep constructed one of the great marvels of Ancient Egypt: an artificial lake a mile long. This Taia was the mother of Akhenaten, who conceived the idea of monotheism in a land where polytheism was the rule. However, there is no evidence that she indulged in magic, and she was certainly not the licentious woman that Rohmer wrote about: she was very much in love with her husband.

It was the other Taia who provided the background which Rohmer used in the story "The Treasure of Taia" and in BROOD OF THE WITCH-QUEEN. In the former story, archaeologist Brian Desmond says to the mysterious Mme. de Medicis:

> "Van Kuyper is wrong. He confuses the princess with the queen, whereas they belonged to different families. (...) The princess was famous for her beauty and notorious for her witchcraft."

("The Treasure of Taia" is included in the collection THE WRATH OF FU MANCHU AND OTHER STORIES; an earlier version of the story, titled "The Haunted Temple", was reprinted in TRR #9.)

The second Tiye was a minor queen of Rameses III, perhaps the last of Egypt's great pharaohs. Tiye was one of Rameses' last wives; by the time of her advent he was getting to be rather old. She formulated a plot, in which many others were involved, whose primary objective seems to have been to take the king's life. To do this the conspirators stole copies of magic books from the royal library, and one of the band attempted to use the ancient spells against the king. It is recorded that they made waxen images of certain men (probably primarily Rameses). When all of the "magical" methods failed, they made preparations to eliminate the Pharaoh through violence. However, the plot was discovered and the conspirators arrested.

It would seem that Tiye's objective was to put her son, Pentawares, on the throne. She would have wielded much power as queen mother. Both Tiye and Pentawares were arrested with the rest of the plotters. The record of the trial of the conspirators still survives, and it was recorded that the worst of the offenders were forced to kill themselves, while others suffered mutilation and other punishments. However, the fate of Tiye herself is not known. We have an indication of what it was through what befell her son. There is an ancient tradition that he was drugged and then wrapped in bandages and buried alive. This was borne out when an ancient, unmummified corpse was found during a digging, an expression of hideous agony upon its face. The horror of the queen's fate is still unresolved, but I cannot help but think of the passage in H. Rider Haggard's CLEOPATRA:

> "Perchance, I shall wake in some dead hour of midnight and hear the stealthy steps of the slayers and be hurried forth. Perchance, they are now at hand. Then will come the secret cell! the horror! the nameless coffin! and at last it will be done! Oh, let it come! let it come swiftly!"

Actually, Tiye's plots were all in vain; for, ironically enough, Rameses III lived barely long enough to order her trial and that of her fellow conspirators. There is some evidence that, indeed, he died before the proceedings were concluded. If Tiye had bided her time and put on a good enough show at Rameses' funeral, she might have gotten the power she desired through guile rather than force.

The problem with the whole incident is that the bulk of what Egyptologists know comes from an antique document in the British Museum, known as the "Great Harris Papyrus" and written in hieratic. In 1963 an Egyptologist wrote a long article in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* which claimed that the whole idea that magic was involved was based on a misinterpretation of the text, and that the queen and her fellow female conspirators had actually employed the somewhat more natural charm of seduction! Egyptologists, of course, are always far more ready to believe the prosaic explanation than the supernatural one (today there are still some

who cling steadfastly to the idea that the Great Pyramid was built only as a tomb, despite the massive evidence to the contrary), and I think that they now consider the case of Taia (or Tiye "closed".

Two good books on the subject are LADY OF THE TWO LANDS by Leonard Cottrell and THE SPLENDOUR THAT WAS EGYPT by Margaret A. Murray (author of THE WITCH-CULT IN WESTERN EUROPE). Cottrell's book includes a detailed account of the whole incident, as well as the new theory concerning it.

The other witch-queen of whom Rohmer wrote (primarily in the short story "In the Valley of the Sorceress" from TALES OF SECRET EGYPT) was also based on fact. Hatasu is known today as Hatshepsut, the queen who ruled by herself on the throne of Egypt and who considered herself Pharaoh, frequently donning the false beard of divinity to prove it. There is not one shred of evidence that this remarkable personage was ever involved in the kind of sorcerour intrigues hinted at by Rohmer. But this makes her no less interesting as one of the great rulers of dead Khem.

The cartouche of Taia (or Tiye)

▽ ▽ ▽ ▽ ▽

[continued from inside front cover]

P. O. Box 261, Culver City, California 90230.]

Joanne Swenski sends a clipping from *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, 24 Apr 74: "*Fu*, a mystery musical based on the character of Fu Manchu, will be staged by the pupils of the University of School of Milwaukee [sic] at 8 p.m. May 1 through 5 at the campus at 6255 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Fox Point. The musical is the creation of Dale Gutzman, head of the school's drama department. The music, compiled by Ernest Brusubardis, the school's music chairman, consists of hits of the 1930s." An attempt will be made to obtain further information on this play---the first step being to unscramble the bollixed school name. Results will be reported in a future issue.

News has just reached me that F. and S. F. Book Co. is at present out of stock on *THE WRATH OF FU MANCHU* (see page 16). An attempt will be made to replenish supplies, but it is not certain that this will be possible. Get your name on F. and S. F.'s mailing list to be sure of up-to-date information. ●

ON THIS ISSUE'S COVER

Sax Rohmer's own name was written in Chinese characters on the spine of some of the British Methuen editions of THE MYSTERY OF DR. FU-MANCHU. The thirteenth edition (1924) and twentieth edition (1938), among others, carry this decoration.

I have asked one of my colleagues in the Postal Ministry, who is skilled with a writing brush, to transcribe the Chinese characters for Sax's name. *[They are reproduced on this issue's cover. - Ed.]* There are some odd details about this. It was not Methuen's who originally devised the characters. Sax received an embarrassing letter from a fan who asked him to furnish a specimen of his name written in Chinese. Sax was compelled to get the transcription done at London University---and pay for it. (I know about this because I saw the correspondence.) Afterwards, he had a rubber stamp made and occasionally used it on his stationery.

The four characters are, of course, used phonetically, without regard to meaning. In fact, the last two mean "old horse". Sax did not know this, and I thought it better not to tell him.

- Cay Van Ash

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The four characters in the phonetic transcription of Sax Rohmer's name in Chinese, reproduced at left, may be translated (reading from top to bottom) *rope/soldier/old/horse*. In Mandarin Chinese they would be pronounced *Soc-csi Lo-ma*, probably the closest approximation to "Sax Rohmer" in Chinese speech. In another Chinese dialect, the pronunciation is *So-shih Lao-ma* and in present-day Japanese it is *So-shi Ro-ma*.

The last two characters occur also in a common epithet of Chairman Mao: *zsi tao lo ma*, "the old horse who knows the road".

- R. E. Briney

你会說 中文 嗎? 我說 英文.

THE MYSTERIOUS ARTHUR H. WARD

by R. E. Briney

In the process of checking the bibliographic entries on Sax Rohmer in the *British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books*, a curious situation came to light. Following the expected listing under "Ward, A. Sarsfield" were four books by a certain Arthur H. Ward, all published by the Theosophical Publishing Society in London:

The Song of the Flaming Heart	1908
The Seven Rays of Development	1910
The Threefold Way	1912
Masonic Symbolism and the Mystic Way	1913 .

Further investigation was certainly called for, on several grounds. First, the coincidence of names: Sax Rohmer's birth name was Arthur Henry Ward ("Sarsfield" being a much later emendation). Second, the subject matter: Rohmer had a long-standing interest in the occult, was interested in Theosophy and was a member of a Rosicrucian society. Third, the timing: during 1908-1912, Rohmer was just beginning his career as a commercial writer, and would have had more time for off-the-track writing than in later years. (Although a handful of stories appeared in various magazines and newspapers in 1903-1906, it was not until after his marriage in January 1909 that he began to make serious progress on a literary career.)

Coincidentally, The Song of the Flaming Heart had come to the attention of W. O. G. Lofts during his researches in the British Museum, and he was able to supply more details about the book. A slim volume of only 99 pages, its title page lists the contents in more detail: The Song of the Flaming Heart / Sonnets / The Way of Beauty: A Mystical Play. Here were more echoes (or pre-echoes) of Rohmer, who was to devote much of his time in the mid-1920s to a mystical play or masque called *Wulfheim*, in which the pierced heart of the Abbot of Wulfheim plays a crucial role. Several brief excerpts of verse from the Flaming Heart volume offered no clues: they could have been written by anyone. Here are four lines from the sonnet "The Sons of Sisyphus":

> The strenuous man by strong illusion maz'd
> Up Life's long hill with ceaseless effort rolls
> The stone of Action, self-imposed and raised
> Into a Moloch fed on human souls.

Conjecture is fun, but facts are more satisfying. Enquiries were sent in three directions: to the Theosophical Publishing

Society, to Mrs. Rohmer and to Cay Van Ash. With startling efficiency and courtesy, the Theosophical Publishing House in Wheaton, Illinois, forwarded the inquiry to their London affiliate, and the answer was back in less than two weeks. The books, of course, were long out of print and unavilable, and the London office no longer had any records of the authorship.

When the matter was put to Cay Van Ash, he wrote to the British Museum and was able to obtain photocopies of some sample pages from the second Arthur H. Ward book, The Seven Rays of Development. Here is the opening of that miniature volume (page size 4½ x 5½ inches):

> There is a striking image in Eliphas Lévi's book, *Dogme de la Haute Magie*, of a number of men shut up in a tower, all striving to reach the floor above through an opening in the ceiling. Some have a ladder, and go up step by step; some have a rope, and climb up; some have wings, and fly up. That tower is the self-sphere in which each one of us lives, like Mariana in her moated grange; the lower room is the personal consciousness; the upper room is the cosmic consciousness, the inner fortress whither we strive to retreat by attaining self-knowledge. I believe that the Ladder, the Rope, and the Wings symbolise Thought, Love, and Aspiration, the Ways by which the men on three Rays of Development attain the vehicle of the higher self, the eternal body, with its cosmic point of view.

And Mr. Van Ash's reaction:

> The specimen pages from the work of the intriguing Arthur H. Ward ... came to hand several days ago. I have read them carefully, three or four times, and can make neither head nor tail of them. ... I would say I am 99 percent certain that Sax did not write them. Apart from the not too remarkable coincidence that Mr. Ward begins by quoting Eliphas Lévi, there is nothing in either language or expression that is typical of Sax, who was often mysterious but never obscure.

Mrs. Rohmer's response was in the same vein, and contained some additional interesting information:

> About the Theosophical Publishing Society: I know nothing of Sax doing any writing for them, although for some time we were interested in the subject of Theosophy and attended many lectures by Annie Besant, whom we admired very much. We always believed (and I still do) in reincarnation.
>
> I recall having heard Sax and his secretary (one Claude Wilkins, who was a Theosophist) discuss someone using the name Arthur H. Ward. It could have been the

man's real name, of course---it is not an unusual one.

Sax, of course, was working hard to get along in those years. I don't think he would have had time to write anything other than orders he had from magazines, which paid. The Arthur H. Ward was mentioned in America also by one or two people. Sax never owned up to it, if he ever wrote those articles and books. It is very odd, as you say, because these are the subjects he was very interested in. I was closely connected with Sax and his work from 1906 (the song-writing period, and before the secretary was ever thought of); if he was involved in any way it would have been through his association with Dr. Watson Councell, who introduced Sax to the Rosicrucian Society. (I met Dr. Councell for the first time in 1909, but Sax knew him from much earlier, since he was the family doctor.)

Anyway, I really don't think that these writings of A. H. Ward were my husband's work. I surely would have come across them in manuscript form, if nothing else. Sax was careless over his manuscripts.

And there, pending any unlikely revelations from other sources, we must leave this interesting byway. The coincidences involved were enough to demand investigation, but it seems clear now that they were nothing but accidental hints and similarities.

A final note: *TRR* subscriber Leonard P. Gray of Luling, Louisiana, has recently reported the discovery of a poem, "Ride to Dreamland" by Arthur Ward, in the July 1904 issue of the New York magazine *The Delineator*. This certainly was not A. Sarsfield Ward, whose submissions to American magazines were still many years in the future. Whether it was the "other" Arthur H. Ward or still a third writer of that name, we will probably never know. ●

FORECAST

Issue #13 of *The Rohmer Review* will be a special issue, containing several surprises.

In the files for future issues are two long articles: "The Shadow of Ying Ko" by Frank D. McSherry Jr. (about The Shadow and Shiwan Khan) and "Fu Manchu: Satan Incarnate" by Francis Lacassin (translated from the French). Also on hand is an article on Little Gatton, the remarkable home which Sax and Elizabeth Rohmer designed and had built in the Surrey countryside, illustrated with photographs; both text and photos are by Cay Van Ash.

Further information on Sax Rohmer's radio plays, songs, verse, as well as obscure fiction and non-fiction, will continue to be presented. Material on the Fu Manchu films and on panel art ("comic") adaptations of Rohmer's books is in the process of be-compiled.

And of course we will continue to offer occasional reprints of scarce items by and about Sax Rohmer. ●

LETTERS (continued from inside back cover)

From CAY VAN ASH, Tokyo, Japan:

I'm not surprised that you failed to locate Si Fan. Apart from the fact that Chinese is subdivided into mutually incomprehensible dialects, there have been numerous rival systems of transcription. I gave the name as "Shih Fang" and it is also written as "Chih-Fang".

When questioned on the subject (THE HAND OF FU-MANCHU, Chapter 5) Nayland Smith says: "The Si-Fan are the natives of Eastern Tibet." I doubt this as being strictly accurate, since Si Fan---to stick to the original spelling---is actually quite a long way north of Tibet, in what is now known as the Autonomous Region of Sinkiang. However, it looked deceptively close on the simple sketch map where I first saw it, in an old book by the Swedish explorer Sven Hedin. (Sax may very likely have got it from the same source.) I later checked it with a large scale map including Chinese ideographs. There is a road going to it, but no railway. It is in the region called Dzungaria, close to the Mongolian border and at the foot of the Altai Mountains. The nearest place of more reasonable size is Tihua (or Urumchi), the capital of Sinkiang. At a very rough guess, Si Fan is about 400 km. north-east, and calculating the map reference as well as I can, it is situated some 44.6° North and 92.3° East.

The region could hardly be called anything more than nominally Chinese, and was first conquered under the Doctor's presumed ancestors, the Manchus. Also the extremely mixed nature of the population ties up quite nicely with the notably international character of "the Si-Fan".

The same book by Hedin makes an interesting reference to "the Lama College or monastery of Rachë Churân". (You will recognize the reference.) Failing to find this anywhere, I seized the opportunity to ask a Tibetan lama whom I met in Tôkyô several years ago. To my surprise, he recognized and acknowledged it at once. It was not, he said, a specific monastery but rather a cult which included magic and other mysterious practices. Once again I must salute Sax for his genius in picking up bits of obscure information.

For Sale: A number of mint copies of the Airmont paperback edition of *BIANCA IN BLACK* by Elizabeth Sax Rohmer---$1.00 per copy, postpaid. Please include a 10¢ stamp for the return of your money in case the copies have been sold when your order arrives.

R. E. Briney / 4 Forest Ave. / Salem, Mass. 01970

THE SMITH LETTERS

[Editor's Note: For a number of years I have been accustomed to the receipt of mail from many parts of the world, from both business and hobby connections. Thus I saw nothing unusual in the arrival, one late summer day in 1972, of a letter postmarked Rangoon, Burma. It was on the stationery of the Inya Lake Hotel, and the sender was identified on the envelope as a certain "D. N. Smith". It was not until I had opened the envelope and begun to read the letter that the possible significance of that plain name struck me. I glanced at the bottom of the sheet and, sure enough, there was the full signature: Denis Nayland Smith.

My first thought, uncharitably but naturally, was of a hoax. But the Burmese stamps and postmark were undeniably genuine, as also (so subsequent investigation proved) was the hotel stationery. And I could not at that moment think of any acquaintance with the requisite knowledge and the proper geographical location to have composed the letter and had it sent from Burma.

The mystery was deepened about ten days later, when I received a rather puzzled note from Douglas Rossman (founder of *The Rohmer Review*), enclosing another "D. N. Smith" letter: written in the same hand, on the same hotel stationery, and posted from Rangoon. Both letters were written with a rather pale blue biro (which is why the copy on the next page is less than satisfactory; a more faithful reproduction would require photography and printing which are beyond *TRR*'s present budget), and the handwriting appears labored.

In the months since these two letters arrived, no one has stepped forward to claim authorship. A note addressed to D. N. Smith at the Inya Lake Hotel elicited no reply, and was not returned to the sender. (In view of the state of the international mails, this is admittedly a shaky basis for any deducations.) The reader will have to decide for himself what to make of the original letters, whose texts are reproduced below.]

Rangoon, 21st August 1972

Dear Rossman,

It is raining, as it is here every day this time of year, and I realise that time is running out---so I am back for a last look at familiar places.

Your little magazine reached me; a friend in London sent a copy on. Most interesting. Amazing as it is, Dr. F/M is <u>still living</u>; in retirement, but he has

cheated time three times over---something he gets from orchids, as you know. I know where he is, but because of an agreement, I have given my word to keep it secret. I was in hospital here for a short while, but better now. Petrie's grandson is with me; a physician himself, he treated me with a preparation which came in the post. Because I trust the sender's word completely I let him use it---and to it, I am convinced, I owe my remaining life.

Weymouth is gone, and many others with him, but I can still see the skies of Burma and smell its sweet air. Best regards and cheers.

Denis Nayland Smith

o o o o

Rangoon, 21st August 1972

Dear Briney:-

Despite the burden of too many advancing years, am back at my old haunts for a last look. Did you know that the death of Lin Piao was a Si-Fan operation? It was.

It is hard for me to realize that Petrie & Karamaneh have a grown grandchild, but they do. My time draws near, but I am content; the world will never be as it should be, and as I look back I cannot blame Dr. F/M too much for his objectives. It was his methods I abhorred.

Best regards,

Denis Nayland Smith

ဒခင်းယားဧာတ်တယ်

Inya Lake Hotel

Tel. 50574. P. O. B. 1045. RANGOON. Cable: "INYALAKEHO"

Rangoon. 21st

Dear Briney:-

Despite the burden of too m

RADIO FU MANCHU

compiled by Ray Stanich

[This is the second in a series of articles dealing with radio and TV adaptations of Sax Rohmer's stories. The first in the series, "Shhh! Dr. Fu Manchu Is on the Air!" by W. O. G. Lofts and R. E. Briney (*TRR #11*), dealt with the British Fu Manchu radio serial broadcast by Radio Luxembourg in 1936-37.]

1. The Collier Hour

The Collier Hour was first broadcast over the NBC Blue Network in 1927. It was an hour long program, heard on Sunday evenings at 8:15 PM. The program was divided into segments, each dramatizing a story or serial installment from the current issue of *Collier's* magazine. The segments were introduced by a host called The Editor, played at various times by Jack Arthur, Arthur Hughes, and Phil Barrison.

The program may have included a dramatization of THE EMPEROR OF AMERICA in 1927-28, but no information on this is available. The serializations which are known are:

THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED (12 installments)	1 May - 17 Jly 1929
DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU (12 installments)	9 Mar - 25 May 1930
YU'AN HEE SEE LAUGHS (12 installments)	1 Mar - 17 May 1931.

In the Fu Manchu serialization, the part of Fu Manchu was played by Arthur Hughes. By 1932, when THE MASK OF FU MANCHU was serialized in *Collier's* magazine, another Fu Manchu radio serial was already on the horizon.

2. Fu Manchu

In 1932 the CBS Network introduced their *Fu Manchu* series. This was a series of thirty-one half-hour programs, heard on Monday evenings at 8:45 PM. (In the New York area the program was carried by station WABC.) The premiere broadcast was on 26 September 1932, and the series lasted until 24 April 1933. During the week prior to the first episode, an interesting succession of brief articles appeared in various newspapers.

From the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Monday 19 Sep 1932:

From London, Sax Rohmer (the "S" in his signature looks like a $ sign) writes that he sailed from Southampton on Thursday and will arrive in New York on 22 September. From New York he will fly to Chicago for the rehearsals and opening of the DR. FU MANCHU series which opens on CBS on 26 September. He writes: "I am deeply interested in radio and dramatic technique, which has been enormously developed on your side." ... The series is being sponsored by Campagna. Charles Warburton portrays the leading role.

From the *New York Times*, Thursday 22 Sep 1932:

SAYS BRITISH CRIME RISES.

Sax Rohmer Blames Influence and Invasion of Our Gangs.

Sax Rohmer, author of mystery stories, arrived with Mrs. Rohmer on the White Star liner *Majestic* yesterday to take part in the first of a series of radio broadcasts based on dramatizations of his stories. He will be at the Ritz for a few days and then go to Chicago for the broadcasts.

Mr. Rohmer said that crime was decidedly on the increase in England. This he attributed largely to the influence of American crime and the fact that some American criminals had transferred their activity to London.

He thought that Scotland Yard was capable enough when dealing with ordinary crimes but frequently ineffective when faced with organized bands. The Yard is usually headed by a military or naval man, who does not necessarily know the science of criminology, Mr. Rohmer said, adding the opinion that it would be better if the chief had risen from the police.

From the *Pittsburgh Press*, Thursday 22 Sep 1932:

(UP) - Convinced that he is about to perfect a system for beating the Bank at Monte Carlo, Sax Rohmer, the English writer, arrived yesterday on the *Majestic*. He said he tried the system on small bets recently with success. "It's all a question of mathematics," he remarked. Rohmer said crime was increasing in England and that Scotland Yard must be reorganized to fight criminals.

From the *New York Herald Tribune*, Sunday 25 Sep 1932 (Sec. VII, p. 6):

... Rohmer has crossed the ocean to be present at the initial performance, which will be played in full costume. Fred Ibbett, formerly with the BBC, will direct the dramas, each episode of which will be a complete program.

(Elsewhere on the same page appeared a photo of Rohmer, with caption:) Sax Rohmer will be heard over WABC at 12:30 P.M. (Sunday) for a fifteen minute interview.

From the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Wednesday 28 Sep 1932 (p. 22):

Extract from "Radio Dial-Log" column by Jo Ranson

Dr. Fu Manchu on WABC

Dr. Fu Manchu made his appearance on WABC Monday night and this corner found it extremely difficult to try and grasp the ominous words of that insidious Oriental fellow.

If Dr. Fu Manchu has marbles in his mouth he had better take them out before Nailand [sic] Smith of Scotland Yard gets after him and makes him say uncle ten times.

As for Sax Rohmer, who spoke on the first program, he's a delightful fellow possessed of charm and wit, and appreciative of American broadcasting methods.

From *Billboard*, Saturday 8 Oct 1932 (p. 17):

(Review of the Fu Manchu premiere. The plot summary indicates that the first episode was an adaptation of "The Zayat Kiss".)

After the drama of twenty odd minutes, there were introductory remarks, commercial credits, and a talk by Sax Rohmer toward the close of the half hour period. His talk further added to the impetus of the opening program of the series which originates in the CBS Chicago studios.

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As the above clippings indicate, the inauguration of this Fu Manchu series provided the occasion for at least two of Sax Rohmer's rare personal appearances on radio.

It would be interesting to know whether Rohmer did indeed fly from New York to Chicago, as

John C. Daly as *Fu Manchu*

the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* columnist states or whether, as is more likely, he travelled by train.

The cast of *Fu Manchu* was as follows:

Fu Manchu	John C. Daly
Karameneh [sic]	Sunda Love
Malik, the French detective	Stanley Andrews
Nayland Smith	Charles Warburton
Dr. Petrie	Bob White.

Partway through the series, John C. Daly was replaced by Harold Huber, and Sunda Love by Charlotte Manson. In the late 1930s Huber became a popular gangster actor for Warner Brothers, as well as a radio actor. He even wrote some radio scripts for *Suspense* in the early 1950s; he died in 1953. (His face, if not his name, will be familiar to old-movie buffs. A photograph of him can be found in *Who Is That?* by Warren B. Meyers, Personality Posters Inc., N.Y., 1967.)

[Undoubtedly a considerable amount of material remains to be uncovered concerning the *Fu Manchu* serial. The November 1932 issue of *Radio Index* contained an article on the program. The premiere episode must have been reviewed by *Daily Variety* and other radio and show-business periodicals. And surely the Chicago newspapers carried articles about the program and about Sax Rohmer's visit to that city. Ample ground for future research...]

3. The Shadow of Fu Manchu

In 1939 another and lengthier Fu Manchu radio series was produced. This was a series of 77 fifteen-minute episodes, under the over-all title *The Shadow of Fu Manchu*. First broadcast on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 May to 1 November 1939, the series was made available in transcription and re-broadcast on other dates in various parts of the country. For example, the New York dates were 18 March to 9 November 1940.

The first 39 episodes are available on tape, and have been circulating among collectors of old radio shows for a number of years. Additional episodes exist, and will be placed in circulation in due course, but it is generally agreed that not all 77 episodes have been preserved.

The adaptation is quite faithful to the original books, though in the middle of the series the episodes occur in somewhat jumbled order. #1-21 are from THE INSIDIOUS DR. FU-MANCHU, #22-27 from THE HAND OF FU-MANCHU, and #28-39 from THE RETURN OF DR. FU-MANCHU:

1.	The Insidious Dr. Fu-Manchu	8 May 1939
2.-3.	The Zayat Kiss	10 & 12 May
4.-5.	The Clue of the Pigtail	15 & 17 May
6.-7.	Redmoat	19 & 22 May
8.-9.	The Green Mist	24 & 26 May

10.-11.	The Call of Siva	29 & 31 May 1939
12.-13.	Kâramanèh	2 & 5 Jun
14.-15.	"Andaman - Second!"	7 & 9 Jun
16.-17.	The Golden Flask	12 & 14 Jun
18.-19.	The Spores of Death	16 & 19 Jun
20.-21.	The Knocking on the Door	21 & 23 Jun
22.	The Traveler from Tibet	26 Jun
23.	The Flower of Silence	28 Jun
24.	The Si-Fan Move	30 Jun
25.	Zarmi of the Joy-Shop	3 Jly
26.	The Tûlun-Nûr Chest	5 Jly
27.	The Golden Pomegranates	7 Jly
28.	A Midnight Summons	10 Jly
29.	The Cry of a Nighthawk	12 Jly
30.	Under the Elms	14 Jly
31.	Enter Mr. Abel Slattin	17 Jly
32.	The Climber	19 Jly
33.	The White Peacock	21 Jly
34.	Dark Eyes Look into Mine	24 Jly
35.	The Coughing Horror	26 Jly
36.	The Questing Hands	28 Jly
37.	The Silver Buddha	31 Jly
38.	The Bells	2 Aug
39.	The Six Gates	4 Aug

4. NBC Mystery Theatre

In its broadcast of Tuesday 2 August 1944, at 9 P.M. EWT, the *NBC Mystery Theatre* presented a half-hour adaptation of a Fu Manchu story. No further information is available at present.

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[The photograph on page 13 was supplied by Jack Buck of Dumont, N.J. It appeared previously in *TRR* #9.

Future articles in this series will deal with Sax Rohmer's non-Fu Manchu radio plays for the BBC, and with the U.S. television pilot and series.]

ADDENDA: According to the files at NBC, Sax Rohmer appeared in person on the *Collier Hour* for May 1, 1931, offering a brief commentary on *Yu'an Hee See Laughs*.

Readers who compulsively check details will have noticed that the dates given for the broadcasts of *The Day the World Ended* are Wednesdays rather than Sundays. According to John E. Carroll, the *Collier Hour* in its early years was broadcast on the Wednesday preceding publication of the magazine, rather than on the Sunday following publication.

BOOK NEWS

Two new editions of Sax Rohmer's *THE ROMANCE OF SORCERY* were published late in 1973. One is a paperback edition of the abridged text (the same as that reprinted by Paperback Library in 1970), with the index omitted. The publisher is Venus Freeway Press, Inc. The book is #FP 2028, priced at $1.75.

The other new edition is of much more interest: a facsimile reprint of the original 1914 edition, including the illustrations. This is the first appearance of the complete text in almost sixty years. The publisher is Causeway Books, proprietors of an extensive line of reprints in the occult field. This edition includes a new nine-page introduction by Felix Morrow. Although priced originally at $10.00, the book has already been turned over to the discount and remainder outlets, and is being sold at less than the original price. [For example, the book is listed at $8.50 in the latest catalogue from The Aspen Bookhouse, Box 4119, Boulder, Colorado 80302.]

THE ROMANCE OF SORCERY is one of the very few Sax Rohmer books not protected by copyright in the United States. Both of the 1973 editions appear to have been beneficiaries of this situation, and to have been published without prior authorization by Rohmer's agent.

Readers who do not yet have a copy of the short story collection *THE WRATH OF FU MANCHU AND OTHER STORIES* would do well to obtain one without delay. The publisher, Tom Stacey Ltd., is in receivership---a variation of bankruptcy---and many Stacey books (including the British edition of *MASTER OF VILLAINY* and reprints of several Sax Rohmer novels) are now completely unobtainable. A stock of *THE WRATH OF FU MANCHU* was obtained by the F. and S. F. Book Co. [P. O. Box 415, Staten Island, New York 10302], and the book is listed in the latest F. and S. F. catalogue at $6.00 per copy.

NIGHTWEBS, a collection of 16 stories by Cornell Woolrich, edited by Francis M. Nevins Jr., was published by Harper & Row in 1971. A new edition has just been released in paperback form by Equinox/Avon Books (#19521, $3.95). This is a thick (511 pages) large-sized paperbound volume which is more likely to be found on bookstore shelves than in paperback racks. The 28-page Introduction is an excellent biographical and critical survey of Wool-

[continued on page 20]

Sax Rohmer in French

In view of the extensive attention paid in France to popular literature, including both mystery and fantasy fiction, it is surprising that not more of Sax Rohmer's work has appeared in French translation. Only ten of his books, six of them Fu Manchu stories, are known in French editions. (Fu Manchu has fared better in another medium: a long-running Fu Manchu comic strip in the paper *Le Parisien Libéré* has survived for more than 3000 installments.)

Most of the bibliographic information presented here was supplied by Robert Castel of Carcassonne, France. Thanks are due also to Francis Lacassin and to Brian Hughes for additional data.

1. Fu Manchu novels

1931 *Le Docteur Fu-Manchu* [=The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu]
Translated by Henri Thiès
Collection "Le masque" n° 94, Librairie des Champs-Elysées

1932 *Le diabolique Fu-Manchu* [=The Return of Dr. Fu-Manchu]
Translated by Henri Thiès
Collection "Le masque" n° 107, Librairie des Champs-Elysées

1933 *Le masque de Fu-Manchu* [=The Hand of Fu-Manchu]
Translated by Henri Thiès
Collection "Le masque" n° 139, Librairie des Champs-Elysées

1935 *La fille de Fu-Manchu* [=Daughter of Fu Manchu]
Translator not identified
Collection "Le masque" n° 185, Librairie des Champs-Elysées

1936 *L'ombre pourpre: la fiancée de Fu-Manchu* [=Fu Manchu's Bride]
Translated and adapted by countess Daniel d'Audiffret
Collection "A ne pas lire la nuit", Les Editions de France

1936 *Sur la piste de Fu-Manchu* [=The Trail of Fu Manchu]
Translated by Ram Sew
Collection "Détective" n° 19, Editions Gallimard

Place of publication for all of the above books was Paris.

Note that in spite of its title, *Le masque de Fu-Manchu* is *not* a translation of the English-language *The Mask of Fu Manchu*. The latter novel has never appeared in French.

In some French bibliographies *L'ombre pourpre* (The Purple Shadow) is erroneously listed as *La fleur pourpre* (The Purple Flower). The latter is a science fiction novel not related in any way to Rohmer's work.

Three of the Fu Manchu novels listed above have been reissued in deluxe limited editions:

1968 *Le Docteur Fu-Manchu* and *Le diabolique Fu-Manchu* [in one volume]
Collection "Club du Livre Policier" n° 47, Editions OPTA
Edition limited to 2500 copies
Preface by Gérard Klein; biographical and bibliographical material by Jean-Claude Romer

1972 *La fiancée de Fu-Manchu* (translated by Mme. d'Audiffret)
Collection "Les chefs-d'œuvre du roman policier", Edito-Service S.A. (Geneva, Switzerland)
Distributed by the Cercle du Bibliophile
Preface, bibliography and filmography by Francis Lacassin
8 illustrations by Philippe Poncet de la Grave

The prefatory material in the "Club du Livre Policier" edition was reprinted from the film magazine *midi/minuit fantastique* n° 14, June 1966. Francis Lacassin's preface to *La fiancée de Fu-Manchu* appeared also in the June and July 1972 issues of *Mystère Magazine*, the French-language edition of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. This essay is in process of being translated into English, and will be published in *The Rohmer Review* sometime in 1975.

2. Miscellaneous novels

1930 *Le crime de minuit* [=The Yellow Claw]
Translated by Myriam Dou
Collection "Le masque" n° 73, Librairie des Champs-Elysées

1933 *La déesse aux yeux verts* [=The Green Eyes of Bast]
Translated and adapted by Dominique Vatar
Collection "A ne pas lire la nuit", Les Editions de France

1934 *La malédiction d'Allah* [=The Quest of the Sacred Slipper]
Translated and adapted by Dominique Vatar
Collection "A ne pas lire la nuit", Les Editions de France

1946 *L'invisible assassin* [=The Quest of the Sacred Slipper]
Adapted by H. J. Magog
Editions Simon

1951 *Nue sous un manteau de vison* [=Nude in Mink]
Translated by Alex Stoya
Collection "Le basilic rouge", Editions Del Duca

3. Short fiction

The following stories by Sax Rohmer all appeared in the French-language edition of the *Saint Detective Magazine*. They are listed chronologically according to number and date of the magazine issue. Translator (tr) and illustrator (il) are identified in each case.

1955 Apr *L'assassin frappe au pied* [=Murder Strikes at Lychgate]
n° 2 tr: Jacques Brécard il: J. Gillain

1958 Aug *Le yatagan at-il servi?* [=The Turkish Yataghan]
n° 42 tr: Jeanne Fournier-Pargoire il: E. Dufour

1959 Apr *Les momies décapitées* [=The Headless Mummies]
n° 50 tr: René Lécuyer il: Flip

Jly *Un bourreau respectable* [=Limehouse Rhapsody]
n° 53 tr: Jacques Brécard il: Ch. Laccourège

Aug *Une mystification diabolique* [=Blue Anemones]
n° 54 tr: Pierre Caillaud il: Ducourant

1960 Mar *Le crime du Ménestrel* [=Death in the King's Room]
n° 61 tr: Pierre Caillaud il: Ch. Laccourège

May *Le souffle d'Allah* [=Breath of Allah]
n° 63 tr: René Lécuyer il: J. Boullet

1961 Dec *La momie de Cléopatre* [=The Mummy of Cleopatra]
n° 82 tr: René Lécuyer il: Flip

1963 Mar *Rose de la Jamaïque* [=Jamaican Rose]
n° 97 tr: Jacques Brécard il: E. Dufour

Jun *Le vent du serpent* [=Serpent Wind]
n°100 tr: René Lécuyer il: Flip

1965 Jun *Les yeux de Fu-Manchu* [=The Eyes of Fu Manchu]
n°124 tr: Françoise Cousteau il: E. Dufour

1966 Sep *Le mandarin noir* [=The Black Mandarin]
n°139 tr: Jacques Brécard il: Schmitt

It seems likely that other Sax Rohmer stories were translated into French, especially during the author's lifetime. Information on additional titles will be most gratefully received.

One final item: chapters XIII and XXV of the Henri Thiès translation *Le Docteur Fu-Manchu* were reprinted in *midi/minuit fantastique* n° 14, June 1966, under the title "Aux Mains de Fu-Manchu".

[continued from page 16]

rich, and has been extensively revised from the original hardcover version. The 34-page Woolrich checklist which concludes the volume has also been revised for this paperback reprint. Unreservedly recommended.

The Aspen Press, the publishing *alter ego* of The Aspen Bookhouse [address given earlier in this column] has been busy. At hand are two new publications. *DR. THORNDYKE'S DILEMMA* by John H. Dirckx is a remarkable pastiche of R. Austin Freeman's famous detective, a 40,000-word short novel. With an introduction by Norman Donaldson (whose own Thorndyke pastiche, *GOODBYE, DR. THORNDYKE*, was published in 1972 by Luther Norris) and a cover illustration and frontispiece by Rob Pudim, this finely-printed paperbound booklet sells for $5.00 per copy. *THE METHODS OF UNCLE ABNER* by Melville Davisson Post is Aspen's first hardbound book. It brings together the last four Uncle Abner stories for the first time in book form. (The other Abner tales were collected in 1918 in *UNCLE ABNER: MASTER OF MYSTERIES*, a volume which Ellery Queen has labeled as one of the four finest collections of detective short stories ever published.) Finely printed and bound, with an Introduction by Tom and Enid Schantz and a dust-jacket by Enid Schantz, *METHODS* is priced at $6.95.

Robert Weinberg, who contributed "The Blue Scorpion" to *TRR* #10, has inaugurated a series of *Pulp Classics*, paperbound booklets containing facsimile reprints of scarce pulp magazine stories. He has just announced that #8 and #9 in the series will be reprints of the first Wu Fang and Dr. Yen Sin novels. These pulp magazine novels from the mid-1930s were among the most blatant of the many Fu Manchu imitations, and are among the most interesting. Since the price and publishing schedule of these reprints are uncertain, interested readers should direct inquiries to Mr. Weinberg [10533 S. Kenneth, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453].

For readers interested in critical commentary on mystery fiction in general, the Bouchercon IV book *MULTIPLYING VILLAINIES: Selected Mystery Criticism 1942-1968* by Anthony Boucher is still available. Hardbound; limited, numbered edition; Foreword by Helen McCloy; frontispiece by Frank Kelly Freas. $7.50 per copy from R. E. Briney [4 Forest Ave., Salem, Mass. 01970].

In recent months, Bookfinger [Box 487, Peter Stuyvesant Stn., New York, N.Y. 10009] has issued two new titles: THE UTTERMOST FARTHING by R. Austin Freeman, a reprint of that author's scarcest book, and THE CASE-BOOK OF JIMMIE LAVENDER by Vincent Starrett. ($5.00 each.) The four "Gees" novels by Jack Mann (all fantasies) and the seven Bookfinger reprints of scarce Sax Rohmer titles are all still available. The most recent of the latter is *SEVEN SINS* ($4.00 to *TRR* subscribers); all have been listed and described in previous installments of this column (see *TRR* #10, for example). ●

MR. CHANG

A Minor Pulp Villain

by John A. Dinan

While Oriental master villains Wu Fang and Dr. Yen Sin sought to conquer the world, and Mr. Lu (The Blue Scorpion) similarly emulated the epic villainy of Dr. Fu Manchu, Mr. Chang (featured in nine issues of *Best Detective Magazine*) was content with such pursuits as grand larceny, blackmail, bank fraud and jewel theft. It is chiefly these low order criminal aspirations that prevented Mr. Chang from developing into a major pulp villain.

The best of the Mr. Chang stories, Mr. Chang and the Chinese Merchants (Jan 1935), contained many of the necessary elements for launching such a career: (1) a significant adversary in the person of Dr. Ling, (2) a powerful and sinister criminal organization and (3) a unique crime worthy of its perpetrators. Mr. Chang has called a midnight meeting in Montreal's Chinatown with six hand-picked Chinese hatchet-men recruited from Tongs in the United States and Canada. He outlines the supreme crisis of his career: a group of wealthy Chinese merchants has employed Dr. Ling to eliminate him, and he must organize an elite band to turn the tables and dispose of Dr. Ling. The latter, meanwhile, is addressing the twelve Chinese merchants who are his new employers:

> "My most revered friends! In China, at this moment, many duties claim me. I have, for instance, complete charge of the task of ridding our beloved country of the grip that has been placed upon us by a foreign country. This country seeks to absorb us. Fortunately, after all, this is more or less a simple problem. It has in our country at this moment one hundred and forty thousand specially trained troops. They control the strategic railway points."

Discussing the ease with which this particular problem will be solved, Dr. Ling reveals some decidedly ethnocentric attitudes:

> "Our best estimates are that the population of China exceeds six hundred millions. The white race does not appreciate the significance of this enormous manpower. We can excuse them, for they are an infantile race, feeding on their own vanity. They do not, for example, know that Chinese armies once swept west and conquered everything. Our outposts reached as far as Portugal.

> Bagdad in those days was a city as large as Chicago is now. Eight hundred thousand residents refused to flee. The Chinese armies beheaded them and built a pyramid of their heads so gigantic that when Bagdad was rebuilt it had to be on the other side of the river."

The plot focuses on a single volume of the famous Yung Lo encyclopedia. This famed collection of Chinese books was almost entirely destroyed in the burning of the Han-Lin College at Peking during the Boxer Rebellion in June 1910. The Yung Lo encyclopedia was described as the most colossal and unique literary work in the world's history. Compiled in 22,877 volumes in the fifteenth century at the direction of Yung Lo, an emperor of the Ming dynasty, it contained all the knowledge that had been acquired by the Chinese up to that date. Mr. Chang's interest in the surviving volume is more than literary or financial, however, since it turns out to be the definitive treatise on ancient methods of poisoning.

In spite of such promising ingredients, the story does not quite come off. The match between Mr. Chang and Dr. Ling ends in a draw with both parties alive, the Yung Lo volume in the hands of Dr. Ling, and Mr. Chang escaping with some stolen jade, turquoise and other gems. While it appeared for a time that Mr. Chang might be intent on a world power-grab, he winds up a simple jewel thief.

Dr. Ling appears only once again (Mr. Chang and the Counterfeiters, May 1935) in the nine stories of Mr. Chang. In the opening scenes, the villain is arranging for a steeplejack to perform a stunt in public so that Mr. Chang and his cohorts can pick the pockets of the assembled crowd!

The other seven stories present Mr. Chang as more itinerant con man than master criminal, and rely too heavily on accidental and coincidental occurrences rather than on villainous master planning. Mr. Chang's performance is disorganized even for minor crimes like robbery (Mr. Chang Meets Uncle Sam, Sep 1935), and his escape is often fortuitous (Mr. Chang's Hush Money, Mar 1935). In two of the nine stories (Mr. Chang of Scotland Yard, Sep 1934, and The Murderer's Graveyard, Apr 1936) Mr. Chang is pitted against Scotland Yard, in the person of Lontana. The first of these stories has some good suspenseful scenes when both Mr. Chang and his adversaries are trapped in a vault-like house.

The remaining stories---Wanted for Murder (Jly 1935), Mr. Chang, Detective (Nov 1935), and Mr. Chang Strikes for Diamonds (Dec 1935)---are disappointing, having all of the aforementioned weaknesses.

If A. E. Apple, author of the Mr. Chang stories, had had his villain use the Yung Lo poisoning secrets to control or eliminate world leaders, or to achieve power in other ways, then Wu Fang, Dr. Yen Sin and Mr. Lu could have had some stiff competition. But Mr. Chang winds up a victim of that pedestrian emotion: greed. He clearly was not cut out to be a master villain. ●

Letters

From FRANCIS M. NEVINS JR., St. Louis, Mo.:

Your mention of DRUMS OF FU MANCHU reminds me of an anecdote which Bill Witney [William Witney, director of DRUMS and other Republic serials - Ed.] told me during his visit here last week. One night in 1940 he slipped into a theater to see what kind of reaction audiences were having to the serial. As the climax of Chapter 1 approached---the engineer dead, the flight across the roofs of the train cars, the two engines racing toward each other ---a loud train-whistle filled the sound-track for a few seconds. The Chicano kid sitting next to Witney turned to his companion and said: "How can the wheestle blow? The engineer, he is dead!" Exit one slightly chagrined director... .

From LEONARD P. GRAY, Luling, Louisiana:

In your Notes from the Editor in #11 you remark that "Fu Manchu has returned (sort of) in comic book form." I have seen these comics, and in no way does the character they call Fu Manchu resemble the real thing. Who is this person with the drooping moustache and pointed goatee? (When will artists forget Hollywood and Warner Oland, and omit the facial hair from the Doctor?) And as for the unspeakable deed done to Dr. Petrie, that is wholly against character. Fu Manchu made a promise to Petrie that he would never disturb his life again, and Fu Manchu is a man of his word. Besides, the Doctor always held Petrie in the highest regard and wanted only to make him a pupil via the Blessing of the Celestial Vision (as noted in ISLAND OF FU MANCHU). Marvel Comics need to do their homework; even the least neophyte knows that mandarin Fu Manchu would never go back on his word.

From STEPHEN SHUTT, Havre de Grace, Maryland:

Definitely the most interesting article in TRR #11, aside from the one by Rohmer, was "The Seals of the Si-Fan" by Cay Van Ash. Mr. Van Ash continues to turn out incredibly esoteric articles on Fu Manchu. I am led to wonder if he has not had a private session with the Mandarin Doctor himself. I should very much like to see Mr. Van Ash's "more authentic particulars", and how he knew *exactly* where the seal should have been put on Fah Lo Suee. One would think that only a member of the organization itself would possess such knowledge. I was also interested to learn that there is actually a town called "Shih Fang", that is, Si-Fan. Perhaps you could induce Mr. Van Ash to indicate more closely its location? [See the letter from Mr. Van Ash later in this column. - Ed.]

By the way, I would like to dispute Mr. Van Ash's theory on the meaning of "Fu". While it can be read many ways, I don't think that the character *takeru* would be used by Fu Manchu. While it is true that the Chinese originally regarded the Manchus as barbarians, in later years the Manchus came to look upon themselves as Chinese. The Japanese, however, were always looked upon as fierce, conquering barbarians, and to confer a Japanese title upon a Manchu would have been considered an insult. Instead, the Manchu dowager Empress chose a Chinese character.

The first meaning of "Fu" listed in the encyclopaedic work *Chinese Characters* is "master". Think back upon the number of times Fu Manchu was referred to as "the Master". In EMPEROR FU MANCHU he went so far as to use this term as a pseudonym. Therefore, "Fu Manchu" means "Master of the Manchus". The title undoubtedly refers more to his mental powers than to his actual rank.

Pastiches of Fu Manchu have been turning up in many places. "The Dragon", a Yellow Peril/junkie villain in a series of Z-films with such titles as ENTER THE DRAGON and BLOOD OF THE DRAGON, is worth no more than passing mention. There was more Rohmer than Shelley, however, in Dr. Polidori, chief villain of the television film FRANKENSTEIN: THE TRUE STORY. (It was less "true" than the 1931 classic film.) ## In a catalogue from Blackhawk Films [The Eastin-Phelan Corp., Davenport, Iowa 52808] I was surprised to see a film entitled *The Mission of Mr. Foo*. "Plotting against the new Republic [of China], Mr. Foo, a mandarin of the old empire, is uncovered through the efforts of Florence, who does missionary work in the Chinese quarter. She brings the matter to her friend the ambassador, and the plot thickens." The 17-minute film was released in 1915 and stars Carlton King and Gladys Shulettl. [Somewhere---I am unable to locate the reference---I recall seeing a mention of a recent screening of *The Mission of Mr. Foo*. The film was referred to as a satire on Fu Manchu. - Ed.]

Americom has re-released their two clips from the Christopher Lee Fu Manchu series. These are both pieces from *The Face of Fu Manchu*, one with the original title and the other entitled "The Horror of Fu Manchu". This time they come with the added attraction of a sound recording which can be played on any record player. Unfortunately, synchronization with the film is difficult, since it appears that the film moves slightly faster than the record... . The second film, which is the one I looked at, has the torture scene in which Fu Manchu drowns a girl in a glass-walled chamber.

After receiving the new TRR with the Fu Manchu seals in it, I decided to show them to an acquaintance of mine, a girl from Taiwan, to see if she could translate them. Despite the archaic formation, she could. The words, she informed me, meant the chamber in which a newlywed couple spends their wedding night! You can imagine my surprise. Somehow I can't help wondering how Nayland Smith, with his extensive knowledge of Eastern languages, kept from breaking up every time he spoke grimly of the secret society of the "wedding night chamber".

[With regard to "Fu Manchu" and "Si-Fan" in Chinese, two things have to be remembered. One is that we have no first-hand information, from either Sax Rohmer or Fu Manchu, on the proper choice of characters, pronunciations, or meanings. The second is the complexity of the Chinese language: several ideographs can have the same pronunciation, the same ideograph can be pronounced in several ways according to context, and--as was pointed out by Leslie Charteris in TRR #6--even the intonation with which a syllable is spoken can alter its meaning. At one time I believed that it was possible to get a definitive answer at least as regards the characters recorded so far in TRR: page 15 in #9 for "Fu Manchu" and page 22 in #11 for "Si-Fan". I asked four Chinese friends---all native users of the language, who still speak Chinese in their homes---for their interpretations, and received four different readings! The closest to the meanings already mentioned in TRR are "martial" or "warlike" for the character 武 ("Fu"), and "library" (literally: chamber for storing paper) as a translation of the "Si-Fan" characters. Perhaps Sax Rohmer was wise in not attempting to pin things down more precisely... . - Ed.]

From ROY HUNT, Denver, Colorado:

In looking over my copy of the American edition of *The Book of Fu-Manchu*---unfortunately sans d/w---I remember well that the jacket design was the same as the one used on the wrap-around jacket of *The Return of Dr. Fu-Manchu*. What a desirable item this is for a Rohmer collection! The book appears from time to time on dealers' lists, but almost never with dust-wrapper. A friend of mine has the British edition of *Book* in d/w, but it is a different design, of course.

When I saw *Daughter of the Dragon* back in 1931, the picture was introduced by flashing on the screen a full-color picture of the *Return* d/w design. It overlapped the then small screen. No lettering. [Curious that the jacket design for *Daughter of Fu Manchu* was not used. Perhaps it was not considered dramatic enough: a girl in vaguely Oriental dress menaced by a hand holding a long dagger, superimposed on a map of London. - Ed.] However, as you know, many jackets of that time had the lettering done separately on a sheet of acetate; the illustration could then be reproduced without the lettering for use as a frontispiece, or in advertising matter.

My favorite jacket design on the Rohmer books through the years has always been the one on the original edition of *The Hand of Fu-Manchu*. One wonders if the originals of all these drawings and paintings have survived, and where they are now... .

[Some of the jacket designs for the Rohmer books were indeed good, but none of them could compare to the Coll and Flanagan illustrations in *Collier's*. Flanagan was to Rohmer what St. John was to Burroughs, or Sime to Dunsany. - Ed.]

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